



# NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Rural Development  
World Wide Web: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>

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Alisa Harrison (202) 720-4623

Tim McNeilly (202) 720-1019

**USDA ANNOUNCES INVESTMENT OF \$10.9 MILLION IN BUSINESS  
DEVELOPMENT FUNDS FOR RURAL AMERICA**  
*Funding to Create or Save Over 900 Rural Jobs/55 Rural Business Ventures*

WASHINGTON, April 6, 2004 – Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman today announced the selection of 34 loan and grant recipients in 17 states that will receive \$10.9 million in rural business development funds. The loans and grants will support 55 business ventures and assist in the creation or saving of over 900 rural jobs and as part of the Bush Administration's ongoing efforts to spur economic development in rural areas.

"The Bush Administration is committed to the future of America's rural communities," said Veneman. "The funds will provide continued support for locally-driven community and economic development efforts."

The grants and loans are awarded through USDA Rural Development to cooperative organizations, which in turn provide loans or grants to support local economic or community development efforts. Funds can be used for a variety of purposes, including community facilities and infrastructure, improving access to local medical care and other projects that encourage a favorable climate for jobs and growth. Of the \$10.9 million announced, \$1.3 million will be used to assist in the development of renewable energy ventures that support President Bush's Energy Plan for greater use of renewable energy. Many of the awards are made in conjunction with assistance from other sources, "leveraging" USDA funds for greater effect.

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Funding of selected applicants will be contingent upon meeting the conditions of the loan and/or grant agreement. A list of the awards can be found at [www.rurdev.usda.gov/rd/newsroom/2003](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rd/newsroom/2003)

<b>Alabama</b>	<b>\$400,000</b>	<b>Illinois</b>	<b>\$450,000</b>
<b>Indiana</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>	<b>Iowa</b>	<b>\$1,286,000</b>
<b>Kansas</b>	<b>\$1,994,000</b>	<b>Kentucky</b>	<b>\$300,000</b>
<b>Minnesota</b>	<b>\$2,725,000</b>	<b>Mississippi</b>	<b>\$450,000</b>
<b>Missouri</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>	<b>Nebraska</b>	<b>\$450,000</b>
<b>New Mexico</b>	<b>\$450,000</b>	<b>North Carolina</b>	<b>\$210,000</b>
<b>North Dakota</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>	<b>Oklahoma</b>	<b>\$352,000</b>
<b>South Dakota</b>	<b>\$300,000</b>	<b>Tennessee</b>	<b>\$450,000</b>
<b>Wisconsin</b>	<b>\$225,000</b>		

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs in a way that will support increasing economic opportunity and improve the quality of life of rural residents. As a venture capital entity, Rural Development provides equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. Further information on rural programs is available at a local USDA Rural Development office or by visiting USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.

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Committed to the future of rural communities.

**USDA Rural Development is an Equal Opportunity Lender, Provider, and Employer. Complaints of discrimination should be sent to: USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410.**

**Business Development Assistance Recipients  
April 2004**

<b>Rural Economic Development Loans</b>		
<b>Recipient</b>	<b>Project Location</b>	<b>Funding</b>
Pioneer Electric Cooperative	Butler County, Alabama	\$400,000
Spoon River Electric Cooperative	Fulton County, Illinois	\$450,000
Eastern Iowa Light and Power Cooperative	Muscatine County, Iowa	\$400,000
Heartland Power Cooperative	Winnebago County, Iowa	\$450,000
Blue Valley Tele-Communications	Marshall County, Kansas	\$160,000
Flint Hills Electric Cooperative	Morris County, Kansas	\$114,000
Leavenworth-Jefferson Electric Cooperative	Jefferson County, Kansas	\$234,000
Pioneer Electric Cooperative	Stevens County, Kansas	\$450,000
Rolling Hills Electric Cooperative	Republic County, Kansas	\$136,000
S&T Telephone Cooperative	Gove County, Kansas	\$450,000
Wheatland Electric Cooperative	Scott County, Kansas	\$450,000
Salt River Electric Cooperative	Nelson County, Kentucky	\$300,000
Wikstrom Telephone Company	Kittson County, Minnesota	\$200,000
Garden Valley Telephone Company	Polk County, Minnesota	\$400,000
Garden Valley Telephone Company	Red Lake and Pennington Counties, Minnesota	\$450,000
Lake Region Co-op Electrical Association	Otter Tail County, Minnesota	\$375,000
Nobles Cooperative Electric	Brewster, Jackson & Nobles Counties, Minnesota	\$450,000
Traverse Electric Cooperative	Traverse County, Minnesota	\$400,000
Wild Rice Electric Cooperative	Polk County, Minnesota	\$250,000
Southern Pine Electric Power	Scott County, Mississippi	\$450,000
Three Rivers Electric Cooperative	Osage County, Missouri	\$100,000
Benkelman Telephone Company	Dundy County, Nebraska	\$450,000
Roosevelt County Electric Cooperative	Roosevelt County, New Mexico	\$450,000
Surry Telephone Membership Corporation	Surry County, North Carolina	\$210,000
Caddo Electric Cooperative	Caddo County, Oklahoma	\$352,000
West River Electric Association	Pennington County, South Dakota	\$300,000
Meriwether Lewis Electric Cooperative	Perry County, Tennessee	\$450,000
Vernon Telephone Cooperative	Vernon County, Wisconsin	\$225,000
Santel Communications Cooperative	Sanborn County, South Dakota	\$450,000

Rural Economic Development Grants		
Recipient	Project Location	Funding
White County REMC	White County, Indiana	\$200,000
Consumers Energy Cooperative	Story County, Iowa	\$136,000
Heartland Power Cooperative	Mitchell County, Iowa	\$200,000
Lake County Power	Itasca County, Minnesota	\$200,000
McLean Electric Cooperative, Inc.	McLean County, North Dakota	\$200,000